Effects of Social Media on Adolescents

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Abstract. Kaiser's 2010 report, a study on media in the lives of young people between the ages of eight and 18, ignited a firestorm of worries about the amount young people consume, with social media being the newest and fastest-growing medium. With teens consuming more than 7-12 hours of media a day, Nielsen found in 2011 that social networks were the most visited sites on the web. And in 2014, Browser Media, Socialnomics, MacWorld discovered that nearly a quarter of all teens log on to Facebook over 10 times a day. Slowly but surely, the research is confirming what we know to be true anecdotally: young people love social media (Simon, 2014). Young people today become consumers at an earlier age than their parents. (Ahava and Palojoki, 2004). In Turkey, 27% of the population is between the ages 10-14 and 17% of the population is between the ages 15-17. In April 2015, the proportion of households with Internet access in general was 69.5%. Such a young national population creates a powerful demand for marketing. (www.tuik.gov.tr). The purpose of this study is to report the findings of a descriptive study conducted to investigate the perception of adolescents on social media advertisements.

Keywords: social media advertising, adolescents' perception and attitudes, Turkey

1 INTRODUCTION

We know lots about young people's behavior online, but, as we all know, this is not the same as what they think and feel about it. It seems that not much time has been invested in uncovering young people's attitudes toward social media and, as the "space of young people" and social media overlap so much, we thought this would be a crucial area to investigate.

After all, the media has fuelled the conviction that the generation currently treading a nervy path through adolescence is truly different to previous ones, comprising antisocial cyberbullies who lock themselves in their bedrooms, becoming pale, spotty and incompetent in rare face-to-face social situations. It turns out that social media and technology is just another area where young people are misunderstood and misconceptions abound. They feel trapped by social media – damned if they do and damned if they don't. Not even the well-parented among them feel they are getting good advice about how and when to use what. They are being left, literally, to their own devices – often a multitude of them (Maunder-Allan, 2013).

The Internet facilitates multiple aspects of marketing including: serving as a repository for almost limitless amounts of information on products, brands, or even competitors; enabling direct dialogue between customers and organizations; facilitating the ordering, customization and payment for goods; and even the sale and distribution of digital goods. Further, the World Wide Web has enabled at least two types of marketing communication that may be considered highly targeted: Interruption or "territorial" tactics such as banners, pop-ups, and interstitial advertising and content-based sites for specific products, brands, or companies (Karson et. al, 2006).

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Bauer and Greyser (1968) were the first to study consumers' attitudes towards advertising in general. They found two dimensions underlying consumers' attitudes and beliefs: economic and social. There were some studies (e.g., Muehling, 1987) that adapted this two-factor representation; however, some question if two factors are adequate in fully describing

consumers' attitudes and beliefs about advertising (Alwitt and Prabhaker, 1994). Pollay and Mittal (1993) developed and empirically supported a seven factor model of consumers' advertising evaluations.

Internet tools such as blogs, YouTube, Flickr, MySpace and Facebook allow the average person to create content that can be shared with a worldwide audience. The interactive nature of these tools has transformed media messages from one-way communication to facilitating a dialogue. Because teens and young adults were among the first to adopt and utilize these easily accessible tools, it is assumed that they are also among the most knowledgeable about how to employ those tools (Loretto, 2009).

Literature on social networking sites include both quantitative and qualitative studies that explore how students use social networks, and among the top reasons include keeping up with friends, playing games, sharing photos, planning events and as an outlet for self-expression. Facebook is the top used social networking site among college students (Spinks, 2009).

Gangdharbatla (2007) explored social media and collegiate students to find that many students use it as a means to fit in or provide an identity that displays a characteristic they do not portray in order to belong.

Birnbaum (2008) conducted a study to examine the impressions undergraduate college students want others who see their Facebook profile to form of them. The findings indicate that college students create Facebook profiles with two target audiences. The first group consists of friends and other students with whom they have face-to-face interactions; in fact, they expect this group to look at their profiles. The secondary audience consisting of individuals with whom they have a more superficial relationship and less face-to-face contact.

Other researchers have investigated the use of social media and its popularity (Sanderson, 2011), in order to comprehend the best ways to capitalize on it as a tool for advertisement by both organizations and self (Witkemper, Lim, & Waldburger, 2012). Sanderson (2011) has even identified possible lack of social media limitations created by different institutions.

3 METHOD

The purpose of this study is to report the findings of a descriptive study conducted to investigate the perception and attitude of adolescents on social media advertisements. For this purpose 400 questionnaires were sent to one private and one public secondary schools for the students between the ages of 11-16 and 732 filled questionnaires were received.

The questionnaire is made up of perception scale of 15 items. Writers categorised five belief factors: "information seeking", "entertainment", "credibility", "economy" and "value corruption" (Wang et al., 2009: 59).

The information factor examines the personal use of advertising as source of information (Ju-Pak, 1999: 207-231). Ducoffe (1995) has found a significant and positive correlation between consumers' value of advertising and on the web and the informativeness of that advertising. Therefore it can be said that social media provides internet users with information.

Watson, Akselsen and Pitt (1998) agree on that online advertising entertains and motivates customers. Social media gives opportunity for lively interactions with other users which provides enjoyment.

Good for economy is a belief factor designed by Pollay and Mittal's (2003) model. The emergence of E-commerce has led to a global economic growth.

People can purchase from the internet without regional or time boundaries. The last belief factor this study is dealing with is value corruption. Advertising messages are linked to user values and might influence their values positively or negatively.

In this study quantitative techniques were used and with the help of questionnaires, students' habit towards the use of social media, their behavior and their attitudes toward social media advertising were examined. At the same time demographic data was collected. The questionnaires were applied in 4-15 May 2015 in two different schools.

3.1 Research Questions

RQ1: What are the perceptions of students from public and private secondary schools towards social media advertisements?

RQ2: Do social media profiles of a public school student differ from those of private school student?

3.2 Findings

Responses were measured on a five point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

> **Information** social media advertising:
> Q1: is a good source of product/service information
> Q2: supplies relevant information
> Q3: provides up to date information
> **Entertainment** social media advertising is:
> Q4: entertaining,
> Q5: pleasing,
> Q6: interesting,
> Q7: satisfactory
> **Credibility** social media advertising is:
> Q8: persuasive,
> Q9: reliable,
> Q10: reasonable
> **Good for economy** social media advertising
>
> Q11: has positive effects on the economy,
> Q12: raises our standard of living,
> Q13: results in better products for the public
> **Value corruption** social media advertising:
>
> Q14: promotes undesirable values in our society
> Q15: distorts the values of youth

Public School
From public school 195 female and 201 male students participated to the study. The breakdown of the age distribution can be found below:

Table 1. Frequency of age – Public School

Age	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Frequency	11	84	95	89	97	19	1

N= 396

Reliability Cronbach's Alpha 0,732.
After principal component analysis with varimax rotation method, three factors were occurred. Only those items were selected that factor loadings were at least .60 and commonalties more than .50. The test produced KMO value 0.887 and Bartlett's test of sphericity 000 (p<.05).

Table 2. Factors

First factor		Second factor		Third factor	
Q1	,778	Q5	,876	Q14	,862
Q2	,742	Q4	,812	Q15	,790
Q3	,653	Q6	,681		
Q13	,650	Q7	,653		
Q11	,611				
Q10	,585				
Q9	,541				
Q8	,534				
Q12	,453				

N= 396

Entertainment and value corruption factors are occurred. The other items are factorised under one factor.

Table 3. Mean values of the scale

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Q1	2,69	1,312	396
Q2	2,32	1,146	396
Q3	2,88	1,280	396
Q4	2,26	1,263	396
Q5	2,36	1,319	396
Q6	2,26	1,213	396
Q7	2,71	1,369	396
Q8	2,28	1,229	396
Q9	1,96	1,131	396
Q10	2,31	1,152	396
Q11	2,53	1,196	396
Q12	2,15	1,177	396
Q13	2,69	1,341	396
Q14	2,93	1,287	396
Q15	2,74	1,338	396

N=396

Questions (1, 2 and 3) for information seeking has a mean value of 2.63. The students are not really sure about if social media is a right source of information. Questions (4, 5, 6 and 7) for entertainment has a mean value of 2.3975. The students do not partly believe that social media is a right source for entertainment. Questions (8, 9 and 10) for credibility has a mean value of 2.1833. The students do not partly believe that social media is a right source for persuasion, reliability and reasoning. Questions (11, 12 and 13) for good for economy has a mean value of 2.4566. The students are not sure if social media is a right source for economy. Questions (14 and 15) for value corruption has a mean value of 2.835. The students are not sure if social media corrupts the values of community.

Private School
From private school 159 female and 177 male students participated to the study. The breakdown of the age distribution can be found below:

Table 4. Age distribution – Private School

Age	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Frequency	8	69	88	95	68	8	-

N= 336

Reliability Cronbach's Alpha 0,926

After principal component analysis with varimax rotation method, two factors were occurred. Only those items were selected whose factor loadings were at least .60 and commonalties more than .50. The test produced KMO value 0,928 and Bartlett's test of sphericity 000 (p<.05).

Table 5. Factors

First factor		Second factor	
Q6	,837	Q15	,871
Q5	,825	Q14	,869
Q4	,793		
Q2	,786		
Q9	,773		
Q10	,766		
Q12	,763		
Q8	,757		
Q3	,738		
Q13	,731		
Q7	,722		
Q11	,673		
Q1	,641		

N= 336

Only value corruption factor is occurred. The other items are factorised under one factor.

Table 6. Mean values of the scale

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q1	336	2,91	1,286
Q2	336	2,63	1,222
Q3	336	3,00	1,291
Q4	336	2,61	1,313
Q5	336	2,50	1,298
Q6	336	2,40	1,296
Q7	336	2,79	1,329
Q8	336	2,32	1,201
Q9	336	2,16	1,221
Q10	336	2,49	1,202
Q11	336	2,73	1,180
Q12	336	2,37	1,185
Q13	336	2,67	1,270
Q14	336	2,97	1,215
Q15	336	2,87	1,230

Questions (1, 2 and 3) for information seeking has a mean value of 2.85. The students are not really sure about if social media is a right source of information. Questions (4, 5, 6 and 7) for entertainment has a mean value of 2.575. The students are not sure that social media is a right source for entertainment. Questions (8, 9 and 10) for credibility has a mean value of 2.32. The students do not partly believe that social media is a right source for persuasion, reliability and reasoning. Questions (11, 12 and 13) for good for economy has a mean value of 2.59. The students are not sure if social media is a right source for economy. Questions (14 and 15) for value corruption has a mean value of 2.92. The students are not sure if social media corrupts the values of community.

Table 7. Education of mother & father

EDUCATION (#)		Primary	Secondary	University	Graduate	Total
Mother	PS	53	111	188	44	396
	PRS	4	52	214	66	336
Father	PS	29	96	221	50	396
	PRS	3	28	226	79	336

Note: **PS:** public school, **PRS:** private school

Table 8. Number of visiting social networks

Frequency of visiting social networks (#)	never	Once a day	2 to 4 times a day	5 to 7 times a day	More than 7 times a day	Total	
Public School	61	*124*	*111*	34	66	396	
Private School	40	*95*	*104*	32	65	336	

Table 9. Time spent on internet

Frequency of time spent on internet (#)	never	Less than 2 hrs	2 to 4 hours a day	5 to 7 hrs a day		More than 7 hrs a day	Total
Public School	34	*210*	*98*	26		28	396
Private School	19	*166*	*101*	33		17	336

Table 10. Time spent on social networks

Frequency of time spent on social networks (#)	never	Less than 2 hours	2 to 4 hrs a day	5 to 7 hrs a day	More than 7 hrs a day	Total
Public School	68	*216*	*75*	10	27	396
Private School	49	*168*	*87*	18	14	336

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

RQ1 it can be said that the perception of the students of the two different schools is nearly the same.

RQ2 It is found that private school students spend less time on social media than public school students based on their time spent daily at school.

The research is restricted with two secondary schools in Turkey, with the questions and answers to them. The findings are valid for the research population. The results obtained at different scales available and future research comparable with those of this study. Apart from the consumer perception of social media advertising attitudes, behavior and demographic variables can affect the measurement of default intent to purchase will provide further clarification of the research. The scope of this study using the survey method is expected to contribute to the literature of consideration of qualitative research. On the implementation of various socio-demographic characteristics with consumers of the study it is considered necessary for the development of the research.

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